



SABIT GROUP PROGRAM

ECOTOURISM FOR THE RUSSIAN FAR EAST

FEBRUARY 4 – MARCH 4, 2006

DELEGATE BIOGRAPHIES

Alexey Almukhamedov
Administration of Irkutsk Region
Department Head
Irkutsk, Russia

With the largest freshwater lake in the world, the Irkutsk region has a great attraction for tourists. Responsible for the growth of small and medium enterprises, Mr. Almukhamedov is interested in learning how to develop the area in a way that utilizes the natural resources of the lake and its surroundings, instead of encouraging industrial development. He is particularly interested in learning more about coastal tourism, sustainability, and governmental requirements, such as zoning, permits and regulations.

Yelena Andreeva
Mirabel Tour Travel Agency
General Director
Vladivostok, Russia

Mirabel Tour Travel Agency is owned by Ms. Andreeva, and handled about 10,000 tourists in 2005. 1,500 of that number were foreign tourists, with the highest concentrations from Austria and the United States. The company has two subsidiary offices in Primorsky Kray (region), and owns buses and accommodations that are used in various tour offerings. Primorsky Kray and Vladivostok offer numerous types of thematic areas for tourists, including bird watching, wildlife and seashore tours, caves, unique flora and fauna, and cruises. Related to these possibilities, Ms. Andreeva would like to learn more about requirements for specialists such as geologists, ornithologists, and historians, who can provide a higher level of knowledge and detail to tourists. In addition, she hopes to establish a tourism association for the Russian Far East that will present a unified face to market the region to potential foreign visitors.

Yelena Avramenko
Diligans Co. Tourist Company
Director
Yelizovo, Russia (Kamchatka)

Ms. Avramenko would like to take advantage of the Kamchatka Peninsula's renowned natural setting and wildlife to further develop her company's tour offerings. She has already worked with Canadian scientists to provide bear viewing tours, and also promotes tours that visit native villages and peoples on the peninsula for harvest celebrations, native dance ensembles, ethnographic excursions, and folklore

ensembles. Her general areas of interest pertain to camping and hiking, eco-tourism in mountainous regions, and the "Leave No Trace" program.

Vladimir Chebanov
World of Adventures Tourism and Expeditions Firm
General Director
Khabarovsk, Russia

World of Adventures is a non-profit organization, established in 2001, that focuses on eco-tourism and extreme sports activities. They develop excursions focused around rafting, hiking, and rock climbing; and also organize expeditions and competitions. Mr. Chebanov is General Director and still actively leads tours, so has a multi-faceted interest in program topics. He is interested in how to further develop outdoor excursions and also how to better market his offerings.

Yelena Dambueva
Republic of Buryatia Ministry of Economic Development and External Relations
Department Head
Ulan Ude, Russia

As a regional ministry representative, Ms. Dambueva is interested in how the Government can help improve the regional draw for tourists, while controlling the environmental effect that increased tourism will have on the region. Ms. Dambueva is particularly interested in policies and regulations that U.S. agencies have established, and the principles that promote stable but balanced growth. While on the SABIT Program, Ms. Dambueva is interested in discussing the principles of sustainable tourism, destination management, and relevant government policies and regulations.

Olga Gurevich
Primorsky Club Travel Agency
Executive Director
Vladivostok, Russia

Primorsky Club is a full-service travel agency, offering tickets, visas, insurance, and tour development. The company currently has a wide assortment of program offerings, including Vladivostok city tours, wildlife tours, river rafting, and many more. As Executive Director, Ms. Gurevich is interested in improving her knowledge of Eco-tourism programs, to enhance the current programs, and make them more effective at preserving local resources. She is interested in effective marketing, destination management, sustainability, customer service, and program development.



Andrey Izmaylov
Sputnik Buryatia Tourist Agency
Commercial Director
Ulan Ude, Russia

In addition to over 10 years as Director of the Sputnik Buryatia Tourist Agency, Mr. Izmaylov also spent 5 years as Tourist Committee Chairman of the Ministry of Buryatia. Bordered by Lake Baikal and mountains, and with a wealth of history and culture, the Republic of Buryatia offers many natural and cultural tourism opportunities. Mr. Izmaylov is interested in discussing the development of various tourism products with U.S. companies to further utilize these regional resources. His primary goal is to expand the primarily summer tourism season to year-round activity.

Nataliya Kalashnik
Kanikuly Travel Agency
Director of Domestic Tours
Vladivostok, Russia

Founded in 1997, Kanikuly Travel has a portfolio of established travel programs, such as wilderness tours and educational programs in wilderness parks and along the coastal region. As Director of the domestic tour department, Ms. Kalashnik recognizes the potential for further developing eco-tours in the local region and has a particular interest in how to grow the division's business in a manner that is safe to the environment. She is particularly interested in destination management, developing sustainable tours, and working with government requirements and other partner tour agencies.

Igor Kovalchuk
Tur-Okhota Tourism Firm
CEO
Blagoveshchensk, Russia

Tur-Okhota focuses on small group tours exploring outdoor activities of the Amur region, with particular focus on the Arkhanskiy District and the Khingan National Preserve. Tur-Okhota has a particular interest in environment and wildlife preservation. With temperatures ranging from -25°F to 70°F, the region the challenge of creating multi-season tour programs. Mr. Kovalchuk is particularly interested in design and development of trails, tours, and recreational zones. In addition, he is interested in learning about product development and tour guide techniques.

Irina Lavrova
Avantage Tourism Firm
Deputy Director, Head of Tourism Department
Blagoveshchensk, Russia

Blagoveshchensk is to the west of the Pacific coast of Russia, located across from the border with China, and is part of the Amur region. The region possesses three nature reserves and a regional park. Ms. Lavrova is currently trying to establish a database of hotels, transportation, guides and interpreters, and tourist services available in the region, so that a realistic development of eco-tourism, historical and cultural tourism can begin. She would like to gain more information on eco-tourism development and explore partnerships with interested U.S. companies while in the United States with SABIT.

Natalia Nazarova
Dal Invest Tour Travel Company
General Director
Khabarovsk, Russia

As founder and General Director, Ms. Nazarova is responsible for the quality and oversight of tour packages offered by Dal Invest Tours, and recognizes the importance of developing eco-tourism programs for the Khabarovsk region. Resources, such as the Amur River and the Bolshekhokhtsirsky Nature Reserve, are areas that provide much potential for cultural and outdoor excursions. Ms. Nazarova is interested in learning about how to develop ecologically-sound and customer-friendly programs to explore these areas.

Yuriy Nemirovski
Baikal Complex Travel Company
Chief Manager
Irkutsk, Russia

Since founding Baikal Complex in 1991, Mr. Nemirovski has extensive experience in introducing tourists to the wonders of Lake Baikal and the surrounding areas. He works with local groups to clean and preserve this great resource and is involved in the development of the Great Baikal Trail. Mr. Nemirovski also recognizes the need to expand the infrastructure and availability for tourists, but also the need to do this smartly. During his time on the SABIT Program he is interested in learning about building ecolodges, developing new coastal and cultural programs, customer service and forming new partnerships.

Yuliya Nepomnyashchaya
Terratour Plus
Department Head
Vladivostok, Russia

Terratour Plus offers regional tours to Russian citizens, and to inbound tourists primarily from Japan. A member of the Japanese Association of Tourist Agencies (JATA), the company offers comprehensive ship cruises of the Russian Far East, utilizing the river networks flowing towards the Arctic. By using their own cruise ships, the company can guarantee quality accommodation and bypass many of the infrastructure issues that currently exist in the region. Terratour Plus also owns an ecological school that provides classes to children from ages 6 to 17.

Valentina Neretina
Ministry of Economic Development and Foreign
Relations of Khabarovsk Krai Tourist Activity
Analysis and Organization Department Head
Khabarovsk, Russia

As representative for the Tourism Ministry of Khabarovsk Kray (region), Ms. Neretina is responsible for developing tourism in the region, through government investment and service development. Some of the activities the Ministry has done to promote tourism include developing trails through the State Nature Reserve, building tourist centers, and producing promotional materials. Ms. Neretina is interested in learning about what new services and products the Ministry can develop to increase tourism through promoting the local culture and natural attractions, while at the same time preserving the regions natural resources and heritage. She is also interested in exchanging ideas with her U.S. counterparts about how best to assist local tourism operators in promotion of the region.

Nataliya Nosyreva
Tourist Company Maik-DV
Director
Vladivostok, Russia

Maik-DV focuses primarily on ecological and heritage tours, as the history of the region and its development has been largely influenced by its ecology and natural surroundings. Ms. Nosyreva is primarily concerned with the balance between ensuring profitability and the viability of the environment and the natural surroundings, so that future generations will be able to enjoy the unique nature of the

area. In conjunction with this goal, she would also like to establish an association that would combine private tour operators, government representatives, scientists, national parks, and ecologists together to comprehensively develop eco-tourism in the region.

Mikhail Radokhle
Nata-Tour Tourist Company
Managing Director
Komsomolsk on Amur, Russia

With over 15 years in the tourism industry, Mr. Radokhle co-founded Nata-Tour in 1992. The company works with small group on cultural and outdoor exchanges, particularly with water sports, along the rivers Gur and Tumnin. With moderate temperatures in the summer river and lake sports are popular. The cold winter temperatures limit the tourism season. The company also operates cultural exchanges with foreign visitors. In order to expand Nata-Tour, Mr. Radokhle is interested in learning about marketing, ecolodges, and developing cultural tours.

Sergey Spirin
Lucky Tours Tourist Company
General Director
Vladivostok, Russia

Co-founder and General Director of Lucky Tours, Mr. Spirin is interested in further developing the tourism industry around Vladivostok. He identified transit visitors as one problem of the region and is interested in developing attractions to draw tourists to the region instead of only passing through. Through the SABIT Program, Mr. Spirin is interested in learning about developing rafting and fishing programs, trail building, animal watching tours, and other offerings for tourists.

Aleksandr Togocheev
Firn Travel
Director
Ulan Ude, Russia

With over 5 years as Director of Firn Travel, Mr. Togocheev has dedicated his business to the focus and development of eco-tourism programs surrounding Lake Baikal. The region faces many challenges, including environmental deterioration, a short tourism season, and an underdeveloped relationship with the local community. Much of Firn Travel's programs include outdoor tours, such as along the Selenga River Delta. However, as the region's beauty draws tourists, the increased traffic causes deterioration. Mr. Togocheev is interested in learning how he can further develop sustainable eco-tourism programs.